



Corporal James Baldwin, Number 6299, of the 2nd Battalion, Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers)*, British Expeditionary Force, has no known last resting-place; his sacrifice is thus commemorated on the stone of the Ypres (Menin Gate) Memorial: Panel 42.

****In 1920 the order of the name was reversed – Royal Irish Fusiliers (Princess Victoria's).***

James Baldwin enlisted in the English west-coast port-city of Liverpool. His occupation prior to that point appears to have been with the United States' Armed Forces – the Navy - and it is recorded that he had spent ten months – from June 6 of 1912 until April 22 of 1913 - in the Los Animas Naval Hospital in Norfolk, Virginia. There he had been treated – apparently successfully - for tuberculosis and pneumonia.

(Right: The image of the Princess Victoria's (Royal Irish Fusiliers) cap badge is from the Wikipedia web-site.)



(continued)

It was as Private James Baldwin of the 2nd Battalion Princess Victoria's (*Royal Irish Fusiliers*) that he entered into *active service* in France on February 1, 1915. His Battalion was attached to the 82nd Brigade of the 27th Division which, having landed in the French port-city of Le Havre in December of the previous year, was by that time stationed in an area of the *Western Front* to the north of the Franco-Belgian frontier and just south of the medieval city of Ypres*.



**At the outset of the war it had been stationed in India.*

(Right above: *The French port-city of Le Havre at or about the time of the Great War – from a vintage post-card*)

In mid-March the 27th Division was involved in the action of Sint-Elooi (*St-Éloi* in French – but not to be confused with *Mont St-Éloi*, in France, a community which also figures in the history of many units, nor with the *Action of the St. Eloi Craters*, fought in the spring of 1916) where some of the first subterranean mines of the war were detonated by the Germans. The British incurred some five hundred casualties here on March 14-15.



(Right above: *German bunkers, today used as auxiliary farm buildings, in the area of Sint-Elooi – photograph from 2014*)

This action was followed by the *Second Battle of Ypres* which officially occurred lasted from April 22 to May 25. But it was not to be until May 8 that the 27th Division was involved, the Germans unleashing an artillery barrage on its front prior to an infantry attack on that day in the area of the Bellewarde Ridge. In places the line was pushed back some two kilometres by the attackers: in other locations the Germans were held.



One source records Corporal Baldwin's 2nd Battalion as having been in the area of *Sanctuary Wood* with the 27th Division in positions astride the *Menin Road* at the time.

Apparently May 15, 1915, was to be a quiet day – for most.

The son of Edward Thomas Baldwin and Alice Baldwin of Pouch Cove, he was also oldest brother to William, David, George, Mary-Louise, Fanny-Amelia, Selena-Hazel, Horatio*, Uriah** and Edward.

(Right above: *Vestiges of Canadian trenches on private property in Sanctuary Wood – photograph from 2010*)

(continued)

****Private Horatio Baldwin (Number 1054601) of the 14th Battalion (Royal Montreal Regiment), was reported as missing in action on November 5 of 1917 during the fighting at Passchendaele; some eight months later, on July 13, 1918, he was officially presumed dead.***

Having no known last resting-place, he is commemorated on the stone of the Menin Gate, Ypres (today Ieper): Panel reference 24-26-28-30.

*****Private Uriah Baldwin (Private, Regimental Number 1846 of the Newfoundland Regiment) was killed in action on October 9 at the Broembek in Belgium during Passchendaele. He has no known grave, his sacrifice honoured on the bronze situated below the Caribou at Beaumont-Hamel.***

(Right: The Caribou at Beaumont-Hamel overlooks the old British front line and No-Man's Land. – photograph from 2007)

Corporal Baldwin is reported as having been *killed in action* on May 15, 1915, during *Second Ypres*.

He died at thirty-two years of age: date of birth at Pouch Cove, Newfoundland, April 23, 1883 (from parish records).

(Right: The sacrifice of the three Baldwin brothers is honoured on the central stele of the War Memorial in the community of Pouch Cove in the District of St. John's East. – photograph from 2010)

Corporal* James Baldwin was entitled to the 1914-1915 Star, as well as to the British War Medal (centre) and to the Victory Medal (Inter-Allied War Medal) (right).

****The date of his promotion appears not to be documented.***

